

A Corpus-based Comparative Genre Analysis of CEO's Letters from Chinese and American Companies

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Abstract

The CEO's letter in corporate social responsibility (CSR) reports is considered as a significant approach to communicate with stakeholders and it is also an important business genre in the corporate practice as well as in applied linguistics. This study investigated the CEO's letter as a business genre and attempted to compare the rhetorical move structure and lexical-grammatical features between Chinese and American companies, aiming to have a better understanding of CSR reporting in the global context. To achieve this purpose, the present study adopted a corpus of 60 CEO's letter in English version CSR reports from Chinese and American companies of Fortune Global 500 companies in 2019. The result reveals that the Chinese and American CEO's letters have a similar move structure, while there is a significant difference between the move distribution and lexical strategies in choosing personal pronouns, adjectives, and political terms. This study seeks to provide suggestions for writing the CEO's letter and a new insight to oversee corporate communication.

Keywords: genre analysis, corpus-based, CEO's letter, corporate social responsibility report

INTRODUCTION

With the deepening development of economic globalization, many countries are now highly connected in the international business. Companies attempt to go globally and show great concern about communication with their stakeholders from home and abroad. In recent decades, corporate social responsibility (CSR) has drawn attention in international communities. Many companies try to undertake different social responsibilities and to present their values, commitment as well as the performance of CSR, aiming to establish a good corporate image and to improve the corporate reputation. As the information technology has been further developed, an increasing number of companies disclose the information related to CSR and annually publish CSR report on their official website.

However, Zhong (2013) noted that Chinese companies have difficulties in communicating with their stakeholders. And moreover, they have left a poor oversea corporate image as well as reputation in terms of corporate social responsibility.

CSR report is considered as one of the major channels to communicate with their stakeholders, which is used to help companies maintain the relationship with their stakeholders, improve the corporate image as well as reputation, and more importantly, increase the potential benefits (Chen, Tian, Yan & Ma, 2019). As CSR report has been much more common in CSR practice recently, the CEO's letter has been regarded as an essential part of CSR reports. The CEO's letter is generally published in the name of the corporate executives such as the chairman and president. And it plays an important role in CSR reporting and helps the stakeholders better understand the CSR performance.

Therefore, this present study is to conduct a comparative analysis from a generic perspective with the corpus-based approach, attempting to investigate the similarities and differences of the CEO's letters released by Chinese and American companies. This study primarily employed a qualitative approach by investigating the rhetorical move structure of CEO's letters. Moreover, a quantitative approach was applied to explore the move distribution as well as the lexical-grammatical choices. This study is to help companies have a better understanding of the CEO's letter in corporate practice and to provide an insight into writing the CEO's letter from a generic perspective.

The next section is to review the relevant studies of genre analysis, genre analysis in business discourse, and genre analysis of the CSR report and CEO's letter. As the theoretical framework, the genre analysis is later introduced in this paper. Afterwards, the research methodology and data collection are also described in the present study, followed by the research procedures. And the following two sections present the result of the corpus-based comparative analysis, attempting to explore the similarities and differences of move structure and lexical strategies applied in the CEO's letters. The final section presents the conclusion and discussion of the study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Genre analysis

According to the definition from Swales (1990, p. 58), the term "Genre" refers to "a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes." Meanwhile, Biber, Connor, & Upton (2007) noted that the "move" can achieve communicative purposes in a context from a generic perspective, and it can be further divided into two sub-categories, namely the obligatory move and the optional move.

In recent years, genre analysis has been considered as an approach to explore how a specific genre can achieve communicative purpose in the context. Most scholars have adopted genre analysis to study academic discourse and investigated the features of the move structure and the lexical-grammatical features realized in academic writing. Meanwhile, an increasing number of scholars also pay attention to the genres in different discourses, such as business discourse and legal discourse (Bhatia, 1993; Cheng, 2010).

Genre analysis of business discourse

With the further development of international business, business genre has been widely used in corporate practice. Meanwhile, many scholars conducted a series of researches based on the business genres by adopting move-step analysis and corpus analysis. For

example, Bhatia (1993) investigated the sale promotion letter as well as job application by analyzing communicative purposes and concluded that there were 7 moves applied to construct their move structure in these two business genres. Later, Bhatia (2008) examined the letter to shareholders in annual reports based on the genre theory. Moreover, Pinto dos Santos (2002) studied business letters of negotiation from a generic perspective by applying move-step analysis as well as corpus analysis. And Rutherford (2005) also integrated the genre analysis and corpus analysis to investigate the accounting narratives from the annual reports released by corporations. Moreover, Cho and Yoon (2013) transcribed the earnings calls and conducted a corpus-based study, which was framed by genre theory. They studied this business genre from macro and micro dimensions to investigate its move structure and lexical features realized in the context.

Genre analysis of CSR report and the CEO's letter

Recently, Corporate social responsibility (CSR) has aroused the scholars' interest and many scholars have attempted to explore how enterprises can more effectively communicate with their stakeholders in terms of corporate social responsibility. Meanwhile, CSR report has been considered as one of the major channels to communicate with the stakeholders (Chen et al., 2019), which also provides a chance for stakeholders to better understand the CSR management in corporate practice.

In the emerging literature, more and more scholars have considered the CSR report as a business discourse as well as a business genre. Many scholars have tried to reveal the communicative purposes realized in the CSR reports from a generic perspective. For instance, Yu and Bondi (2017) examined the generic structure of CSR reports, which were disclosed in three different languages, namely Italian, Chinese, and English. They tried to explore the characteristics of the CSR reports. Later, Yu and Bondi (2019) switched their focus to a specific section in CSR reports and they investigated the generic features in forward-looking statements extracted from the CSR reports, proving an insight to improve the corporate image.

The CEO's letter in CSR reports conveys the attitudes of corporate executives toward CSR values, commitment, and performance. But only a few studies focus on the CEO's letters from a generic perspective. For instance, Zhang (2012) selected 10 Chinese CEO's letters in CSR reports and adopted genre analysis to investigate how the moves and step were adopted to construct this specific business genre and what lexical-grammatical features were used to achieve the communicative purposes through the generic move structure.

However, little attention is paid to English CEO's letters disclosed by Chinese corporations. Furthermore, it is also scant to explore the Chinese and American CEO's letter in CSR reports based on genre theory from a comparative perspective.

Based on the literature review, this present study focuses on the CEO's letters extracted from the CSR reports. And the study is to adopt move analysis and corpus analysis, attempting to compare the generic move structure as well as lexical strategies revealed in the Chinese and American CEO's letters.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Research questions

The research primarily aims to investigate the rhetorical move structure of CEO's letters in CSR reports as a business genre. Afterwards, it is to explore the lexical-grammatical features that are realized in the generic moves and conclude the strategies used in the context. To achieve these purposes, three approaches are applied in this present research, namely the move analysis (Bhatia, 1993) and the corpus-based analysis (Biber et al., 2007). This research is to answer the following questions:

- What moves are composed in the move structure of CEO's letters from Chinese and American companies? Are there any similarities or differences between them?
- What lexical strategies are used in the CEO's letters from Chinese and American companies?

Corpora

To realize the comparability and operability of this present study, all the CEO's letters listed in this paper come from the CSR reports published by Fortune Global 500 companies. In 2019, there are 129 Chinese companies and 121 American companies in the list of Fortune Global 500 companies. These Chinese and American companies were divided into two groups in accordance with the nationality. Afterwards, they were ranked respectively from high to low according to their revenues in the fiscal year 2019.

Furthermore, 30 companies for each country were randomly selected through a systematic sampling method, which includes PetroChina, State grid corporation of China, China construction bank of China, Walmart, Amazon Walgreens Boots Alliance, etc. These companies were then sequenced and put into an order in accordance with their rankings in Fortune Global 500 companies.

Moreover, 60 CSR reports were downloaded in PDF format from the official websites of the selected companies. Afterwards, the CEO's letters were extracted from the CSR reports. All 60 CEO's letters were published in English and they were then transformed from PDF format into TXT format through the Abby FineReader 11 for further examination. In corporate practice, some companies didn't publish the corporate social responsibility report. Therefore, the other corporate non-financial reports such as the sustainability report as well as environmental, social, and governance report (ESG report) were taken into consideration as the research material, because these reports also serve the same function as CSR reports. Later, the textual errors produced through the transformation were manually corrected.

The corpus of this present study was composed of the 60 CEO's letters and contains 51,614 tokens. It was further divided into two sub-corpora, namely Corpus of CEO's letter from Chinese companies (COC) and Corpus of CEO's letter from American companies (COA). The sub-corpus COC contains 31,085 tokens and the other sub-corpus COA contains 20,529 tokens.

Methods and procedures

In this present study, the AntConc 3.5.8.0 was used for the corpus analysis to investigate the word frequency and lexical-grammatical features in the CEO's letters of CSR reports. Furthermore, the SPSS was applied to investigate whether there is a significant difference in move-structure and lexical-grammatical resources between Chinese and American CEO's letter. The analytical procedure was composed of four stages to investigate the macro move structure and micro lexical-grammatical features applied in the message of executives. Firstly, the moves in the research material were identified and manually annotated. Secondly, comparative move analysis was employed to explore the similarities and differences in the macro move structure of the CEO's letters. Thirdly, comparative corpus analysis was used to explore the lexical-grammatical features by investigating the word frequency as well as the collocation, attempting to reveal the potential lexical strategies applied in the CEO's letters of CSR reports.

MOVE ANALYSIS OF CHINESE AND AMERICAN CEO'S LETTERS

Move analysis of Chinese CEO's letter

After manual annotation and data statistics, the result shows that the macro move structure of the 30 Chinese CEO's letters in CSR reports are composed of 7 different moves as presented in Table 1. And in most of the Chinese CEO's letters, they were arranged in a certain order as: "external environment" – "review of corporate achievement" – "CSR value" – "CSR performance" – "CSR commitment" – "forward-looking statement" – "acknowledgement". These 7 moves are different from functions and frequency.

Table 1. Move structure of Chinese CEO's letter in CSR reports

Move	Frequency	Percentage	Move Type
CSR performance	30	100%	Obligatory move
Forward-looking statement	30	100%	Obligatory move
CSR value	24	80%	Optional move
External environment	22	73%	Optional move
Review of corporate achievement	12	40%	Optional move
CSR commitment	5	17%	Optional move
Acknowledgement	5	17%	Optional move

As it is shown in Table 1, the frequency of the move "CSR performance" and "Forward-looking statement" reach the percentage of 100 and they are obligatory moves in the move structure of Chinese CEO's letter, which indicates that every CEO's letter in the corpus COC has illustrated the corporate performance and future plans in terms of corporate social responsibility.

In the Chinese CEO's letters, the move "CSR performance" summarized the overall performance of the companies in different aspects, such as economic responsibility, environmental responsibility, legal responsibility, etc. Some state-own companies such as the State grid corporation of China (State Grid) and Construction Bank of China, emphasized the significance to follow governmental guidance and their effort in undertaking political responsibility.

In this move, most of the corporations focused on their overwhelming achievement in the fiscal year and pay high attention to disclose their rewards, honor, and especially the rank in their industries. The following example illustrates how the move “CSR performance” was realized in the Chinese CEO's letters.

Extract 1: Moreover, State Grid initiated 61 international standards and 721 national standards, two of which won the First Prize of China Standardization Innovation Contribution Award. At present State Grid owns 82,810 patents, including 20,715 invention patents, ranking top among SOEs in terms of the number and number of applications for 8 consecutive years. (State Grid's CSR report)

In the example of the State grid corporation of China, the company disclosed the corporate achievement in terms of corporate social responsibility for its stakeholders in the move “CSR performance”. By listing the numbers of the awards, the company attempted to present its contribution to economic responsibility. Furthermore, the company also highlighted the number of initiated standards and patents, indicating that State Grid is capable of dealing with corporate social responsibility for its stakeholders. With the emphasis of corporate performance, the Chinese company portrayed a capable corporate image in the move “CSR performance”.

Meanwhile, the move “forward-looking statement” is the second obligatory move in the Chinese CEO's letters. Most Chinese corporations observed in this study described their future goals and the related strategies in this move, which were used to promote the development of their corporate social responsibility in the coming fiscal year. Moreover, they also intended to express their resolve and wish to achieve sustainable development in terms of corporate social responsibility. The following example presents how the move “forward-looking statement” was accomplished in the Chinese CEO's letters.

Extract 2: Digital transformation is in full swing, and we find ourselves at the cusp of an intelligent world. We will keep investing and innovating in technology for strategic breakthroughs, and we will integrate sustainability requirements into our corporate strategy, our approach to transformation management, and our business processes. We believe that by working with other industry players, we can help achieve the UN's sustainable development goals using ICT technologies. Together, we will bring digital to every person, home and organization for a fully connected, intelligent world. (Huawei's sustainability Report)

In the move “forward-looking statement” of Huawei's CEO's letter, the company has expressed its positive attitude toward the technological innovation and the sustainable value. Moreover, it also demonstrates its resolve to achieve sustainable goals, despite the fierce competition in digital transformation. This move was used to help this Chinese company to boost the stakeholders' confidence and maintain good relationship between Huawei and its stakeholders.

Furthermore, the expressions related to the national political strategies and plans can also be found in several Chinese companies, especially the state-own ones. The following example presents such political related issues in move “forward-looking statement” of the Chinese CEO's letters.

Extract 3: We will deeply study and implement Xi Jinping's socialist thought with Chinese characteristics in the new era. In the historical process of China's automobile industry growing from big to strong, we will never forget our original intention, remember our mission, assume our responsibilities and move forward, firmly promote the high-quality development of Dongfeng's cause, and make contributions to the building of an automobile power and the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. (Dongfeng Motor Corporation CSR report)

Dongfeng Motor Corporation is one of the well-known state-own enterprises in China. The move “forward-looking statement” of its CEO’s letter was highly related to the political thoughts, which were put forward in recent years. Moreover, a series of political terms were also mentioned in this move. In this move, Dongfeng Motor Corporation has stressed the importance of political guidance in undertaking corporate social responsibility and emphasized its contribution to protect its stakeholders’ interests.

Despite these two obligatory moves, the other 5 moves including “external environment”, “review of corporate achievement”, “CSR value”, “CSR commitment”, and “acknowledgement” are all optional moves in the Chinese CEO’s letters. It indicates that only some Chinese companies have disclosed the relevant information in terms of corporate social responsibility.

Move analysis of American CEO’s letter

In the American CEO’s letters of CSR reports, the result of the move analysis shows that the move structure is composed of 7 moves as same as the Chinese counterparts. The American CEO’s letter presented a relevant flexible structure, indicating that these moves didn’t follow in a certain order. The frequency and the types of these 7 moves are shown in Table 2 as followed:

Table 2. Move structure of American CEO’s letter in CSR reports

Move	Frequency	Percentage	Move Type
CSR value	29	97%	Obligatory move
CSR performance	29	97%	Obligatory move
CSR commitment	10	33%	Optional move
Acknowledgement	10	33%	Optional move
External environment	7	23%	Optional move
Review of corporate achievement	6	20%	Optional move
Forward-looking statement	6	20%	Optional move

As presented in Table 2, the move “CSR value” and the move “CSR performance” were found in 29 out of 30 American CEO’s letters. It shows that the companies described their corporate values and performance in terms of corporate social responsibility in almost every American CEO’s letter selected in this study. Hence, the moves “CSR value” and “CSR performance” were considered as obligatory moves in the American CEO’s letters.

In the move “CSR value”, the American companies emphasized their corporate values and principles when undertaking corporate social responsibility. In this move, many American companies introduced their corporate social responsibility values by describing the historical development. Some companies also demonstrated their

missions and visions in the move “CSR value”, trying to show their positive attitudes toward corporate social responsibility as well as their concern for stakeholders. An example from Kraft Heinz’s CEO’s letter in the CSR report is presented below:

Extract 4: This belief is inherent to who we are, as it’s embedded in our Company Vision: To Be the Best Food Company, Growing a Better World. Consumer First, Innovation, Quality, Ownership and Integrity are the Values that underpin that Vision. (Kraft Heinz’s CSR report in 2017)

The move “CSR value” of Kraft Heinz presented the corporate vision and its inherent value toward corporate social responsibility. In this move, Kraft Heinz has constructed a professional image by emphasizing the significance of innovation, quality, ownership, and integrity in its values. Moreover, this American company also attempted to portray a considerate corporate image by showing concern for its customers, who are considered as one of their important stakeholders. Moreover,

In the move “CSR performance”, the American CEO’s letters have similar features as the Chinese counterparts. American companies also attempted to present their major achievement in economic and environmental aspects.

Extract 5: We had the honor of being listed for the sixth time among the World's Most Ethical Companies by the Ethisphere Institute. We earned a perfect score in the Human Rights Campaign's Corporate Equality Index for the 15th year in a row. And this year we were recognized as a World's Most Innovative Company by Fast Company. (Dell Technologies CSR report in 2019)

In the move “CSR performance” from Dell Technologies, the company disclosed its corporate performance by listing a series of honor and other achievements. It helped the company portray a capable corporate image in terms of corporate social responsibility.

The percentage of the other 5 moves in the American CEO’s letters were range from 20% to 33%, which included “External environment”, “review of corporate achievement”, “CSR commitment”, “forward-looking statement” and “acknowledgement”. It reveals that few American companies selected these moves in their CEO’s letters.

Comparative move analysis of Chinese and American CEO’s letter

After comparing the move structures of CEO’s letters in corpora COC and COA, the result reveals that both demonstrated similarities and differences in terms of the generic move structure.

The result shows that the CEO’s letters in each corpus have a similar move structure. Both Chinese and American CEO’s letters contain 7 different generic moves, including “external environment”, “review of corporate achievement”, “CSR value”, “CSR performance”, “CSR commitment”, “forward-looking statement”, and “acknowledgment”. Meanwhile, all the generic moves are consistent with the communicative purposes of the CSR reports.

Furthermore, it also indicates that the CEO’s letters of both countries have emphasized the CSR performance for selecting the move “CSR performance” as an obligatory move.

The Chinese and American companies have shown preference to describe the performance and to highlight the contribution in terms of corporate social responsibility, which aims to present a responsible corporate image.

Moreover, three generic moves, including “external environment”, “review of corporate achievement”, “CSR commitment”, and “acknowledgment”, are all optional moves in the CEO’s letters.

However, the result also shows that the CEO’s letters of Chinese and American companies significantly differ from three aspects.

Firstly, the CEO’s letters from both countries have a major difference from the size of the text. The result indicates that the Chinese companies tend to draft a much longer CEO’s letter than the American.

Secondly, the result reveals that there is a significant difference from the frequency of move “external environment” and the move “forward-looking statement” from Chinese and American CEO’s letters after the analysis performed with the chi-square test. According to the Table 1 and Table 2 presented as above, the move “external environment” can be found in 22 out of 30 Chinese CEO’s letter, while only 7 American CEO’s letter has this specific move. Chinese companies have shown a clearer preference to introduce the current situation of the external environment to their stakeholders, such as the recent national policies, economic opportunities as well as challenges, and industrial competition. In the move “external environment”, Chinese companies have attempted to highlight their corporate social responsibility achievement and legality despite a series of challenges from the external environment. Furthermore, the results also show that all the Chinese CEO’s letters included the move “forward-looking statement”, while only 6 CEO’s letter was composed of this certain move.

Finally, the Chinese and American CEO’s letter also show a different trend in choosing the obligatory moves. On the one hand, the move “forward-looking statement” was chosen as the obligatory move in the Chinese CEO’s letter, while it was only an optional move in American. Chinese corporations pay high attention to the corporate future. They attempted to convince their stakeholders that they were capable of undertaking corporate social responsibility and they showed confidence in their sustainable long-term development. On the other hand, the move “CSR value” was selected as one of the obligatory moves in the American CEO’s letters, while it was only an optional one in the Chinese CEO’s letters. American corporations generally highlighted their corporate values toward social responsibility, presenting a responsible corporate image.

Comparative analysis of Micro lexical strategies

The present study has compared two corpora COA and COC through the corpus tool Antconc, aiming to explore the micro lexical strategies by investigating the word frequency and lexical collocations.

The result reveals that Chinese and American CEO’s letters have different lexical strategies to use the personal pronouns, superlative, and political words to achieve communicative purposes.

Lexical strategy of first-person pronouns

In this study, four first-person pronouns, namely “We”, “Our”, “Us” and “I” have been investigated. And the word frequency in the CEO's letters has also been analyzed by the corpus tool Antconc. The result shows that Chinese and American companies have adopted different lexical strategies for first-person pronouns. American companies prefer to use the plural first-person pronouns “we” and “our” in the CEO's letters (See Table 3).

Table 3. The first-person pronouns in American CEO's letter of CSR report

Rank	First person pronoun	Word frequency	Percentage
4	Our	621	3.02%
6	We	529	2.58%
37	Us	47	0.23%
42	I	43	0.21%

By adopting the first-person pronouns, American companies have regarded themselves and their stakeholders as a whole, which shows that the companies are not only responsible for their own companies, but also their stakeholders in the development of corporate social responsibility. Furthermore, these first-person pronouns were also used to improve the trust of stakeholders.

Compared with the American companies, the first-person pronouns have been used less in the Chinese CEO's letters, especially the pronouns “us” and “I” (See table 4).

Table 4. The first-person pronouns in Chinese CEO's letter of CSR report

Rank	First person pronoun	Word frequency	Percentage
4	We	521	1.67%
12	Our	249	0.80%
317	Us	15	0.05%
755	I	6	0.02%

It reveals that Chinese companies are more preferable for third-person pronouns than the first-person pronouns. By using third-person pronouns, Chinese corporations have attempted to present a responsible corporate image from an objective perspective and tried to convince their stakeholders for their CSR performance, achievement, and commitment.

Lexical strategy of positive adjectives

After analyzing adjectives, the result reveals that a great number of adjectives conveying positive semantic meanings were used in both Chinese and American CEO letters, such as “new”, “sustainable”, “renewable”, etc. By using these positive adjectives, companies attempted to construct a good corporate image in the public, especially the corporate social responsibility image.

However, Chinese and American companies showed different trends when choosing positive adjectives. The positive adjectives, which are highly related to environmental protection, were more frequently found in the American CEO's letters. American companies have tried to emphasize their performance and contribution to the global

environment. But Chinese companies have used much more positive adjectives, which are related to the economic and political situations. The Chinese companies attempted to demonstrate how they follow political strategies and overcome the economic challenges in terms of corporate social responsibility.

Moreover, Chinese companies have used more comparative and superlative adjectives to describe their performance and commitment in the CEO's letters, such as "most", "best", 'largest', etc. By using these comparative and superlative adjectives, the Chinese companies have tried to highlight their achievements when undertaking corporate social responsibility.

Extract 6: In 2018, we have become one of the mainstream banks with the largest number of professional institutions for risk management and internal control compliance, the highest proportion of personnel, the most realistic classification, the most adequate provision and the lowest non-performing assets. (Xingye bank CSR report)

In extract 6 above, the Chinese companies Xingye Bank used 5 superlative adjectives to describe their achievement in the move "CSR performance". Although the result shows that the American companies also used comparative and superlative adjectives for illustrating the corporate performance, the number of these adjectives was less than that in the Chinese CEO's letters.

Lexical strategy of political terms

The nouns and their collocations in Chinese and American CEO's letters of CSR reports were investigated through the corpus analysis. The result shows that many political terms were used in the Chinese CEO's letters such as "poverty alleviation and assistance", "poverty alleviation path", "moderately prosperous society", "harmonious development of society", and "Path, theory, system, and culture of socialism with Chinese characteristics". All these political terms reflect the current political plans, strategies in China. Such word choices can also be found in the moves "external environment", "CSR value", "CSR performance" and "forward-looking statement". It reveals that the Chinese corporations have attempted to show their concerns and support to the current political policy as well as the sustainable development of China by citing the political expressions.

Extract 7: China Life will, upholding Xi Jinping's thought of "Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era" and the spirit of the 19th CPC National Congress, set high-quality development as the fundamental goal and development as the priority, speed up reform and transformation, and march on the development path with its own characteristics towards a world-class life insurance company that guards people's happy life. (China Life Insurance Company CSR report)

For instance, China Life has cited a series of political terms, such as "Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era" in the move "forward-looking" in its CEO's letters. Meanwhile, political thoughts, events, and plans were also mentioned in the example above. By adopting these political terms, China Life has highlighted the connection and relationship between the corporate future and national development. It also helps the company to present a responsible corporate image by addressing its commitment to social development.

However, few political terms were found in the American CEO's letters. Most of the nouns and their collocations were related to the stakeholders such as customers, employees, and companies.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The present study conducted a comparative genre analysis of Chinese and American CEO's letters from Fortune Global 500 companies by applying the corpus analysis tool Antconc. It attempted to investigate the similarities and differences between the macro move structure and the micro lexical strategies.

By analyzing two corpora COC and COC, which includes 30 CEO's letter for each, the result shows that Chinese and American corporations have similar moves choice but different move structures.

On the one hand, both Chinese and American CEO's letters were composed of 7 moves including the "external environment", "review of corporate achievement", "CSR value", "CSR performance", "CSR commitment", "forward-looking statement", and "acknowledgment". And both groups have selected the move "CSR performance" as obligatory move and "external environment", "review of corporate achievement", "CSR commitment" and "acknowledgment" as optional moves.

On the other hand, the move structure of both the CEO's letters differed from order and frequency. Chinese companies have followed a relevant stable move structure, while American companies arranged their move structures more flexibly. Meanwhile, there was a significant difference in frequency between the Chinese and American CEO's letters. Compared with American counterparts, Chinese corporations pay higher attention to the move "external environment" and the move "forward-looking statement." Furthermore, the result also reveals that Chinese and American companies have adopted different lexical strategies. American corporations referred to themselves with first-person pronouns, trying to maintain the relationship between companies and their stakeholders, while Chinese corporations preferred to use third-person pronouns to present a responsible corporate social responsibility image. Meanwhile, more positive adjectives with comparative and superlative were adopted in the Chinese CEO's letters than in the American counterparts. These adjectives helped the Chinese corporations portray a responsible and positive image for the stakeholders in corporate communication. Finally, a large number of political terms reflecting the current political situation, national plans and thoughts were used in the Chinese CEO's letters, while there were only a few political words in the American CEO's letters.

The present study is limited in the size of corpora. The corpora involved in this paper were only composed of 60 CEO's letters in CSR reports. Although it was good enough for a valid statistical analysis, a more general conclusion can be drawn, when more CEO's letters were included in the corpora.

Recently, the rapid development of economic globalization accelerates the process of intercultural communication between China and other countries around the world. Although more and more Chinese companies pay high attention to corporate social

responsibility, there is still a long way for them to develop effective corporate communication in terms of corporate social responsibility. Meanwhile, CSR report is one of the major reports, which help companies better communicate with their stakeholders and have an important impact on presenting a responsible image for the public. With the comparative genre analysis of Chinese and American CEO's letters in the CSR report, the study shows that Chinese companies should pay more attention to their CSR value and present their corporate values through CEO's letters. In the move "CSR value", Chinese corporations should not only mention the core value related to the political situations but also their internal corporate values for the corporate social responsibility. Furthermore, Chinese corporations can bridge the connection between them and stakeholders by using more first-person pronouns.

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